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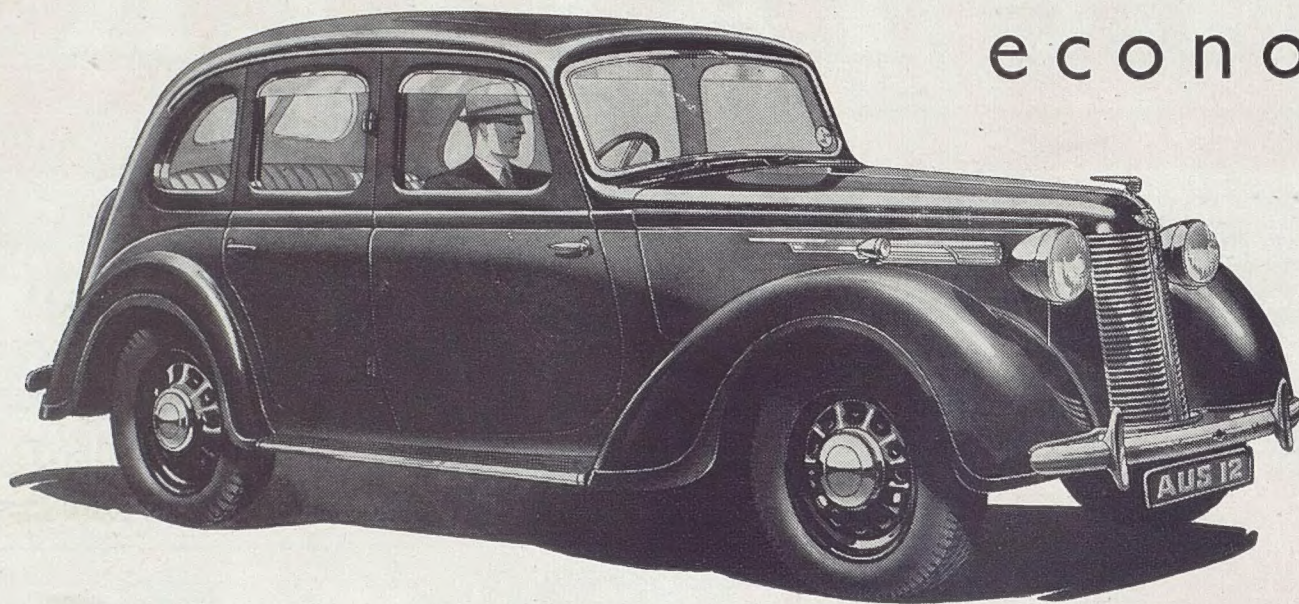
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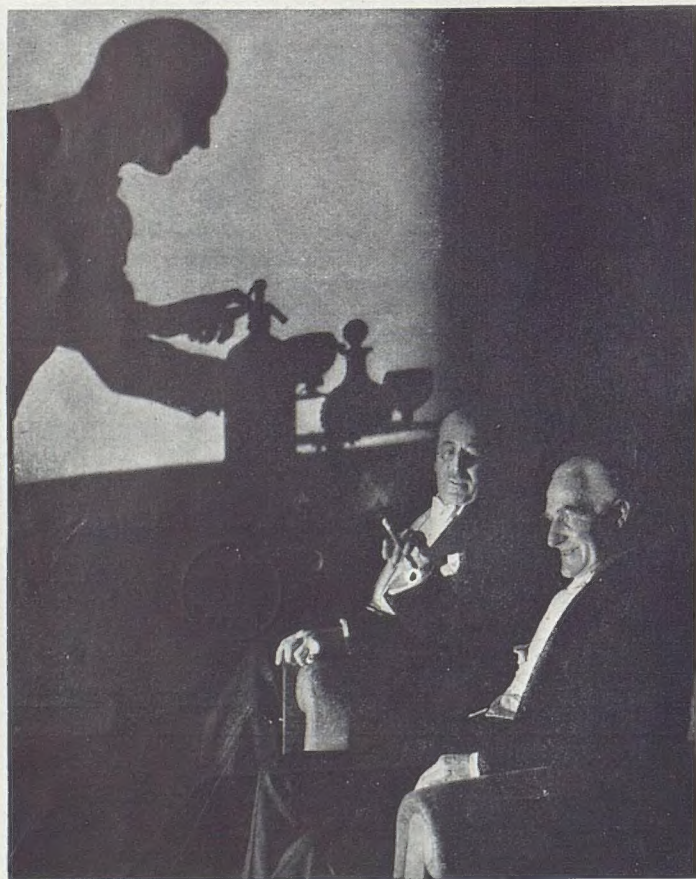
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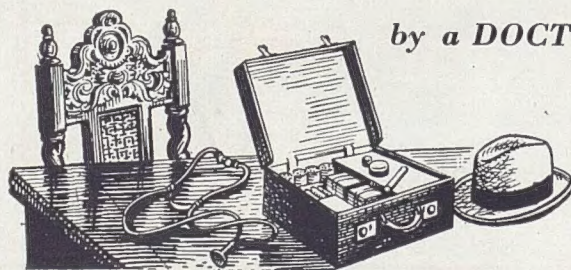


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Stwaeb

Our Radiant Princess

This happy photograph of H.R.H. Princess Elizabeth was taken just before the Christmas holiday which Their Majesties the King and Queen arranged to spend at Sandringham with their daughters, H.M. Queen Mary and H.R.H. the Duchess of Kent and her children. Princess Elizabeth enjoyed a round of social engagements during the weeks just before the holiday. She went several times to the theatre, and to after-the-play supper parties with young friends, attended a private ball and appeared at the Buckingham Palace Staff Ball, at which she danced with the guests, and also showed her skill as a reel dancer in an eightsome for which the pipers of the Scots Guards played



The Royal Society of Portrait Painters Private View

The Royal Society of Portrait Painters held their private view at the Royal Academy recently. In the foreground are Mrs. Littler, Lord and Lady Milne, Maurice Codner, the artist, Mr. and Mrs. George Robey. Maurice Codner has painted George Robey as Falstaff; also among his work in this year's exhibition are portraits of the Hon. Mrs. John Grimston, the late Admiral Sir Frederic Wake-Walker and Sir Louis Newton

Simon Harcourt-Smith

PORTRAITS IN PRINT

*"The memory of the past will stay,
And half our joys renew."*

—THOMAS MOORE

On Feeling Well Again

ALL my life, perhaps because I have known so much of it, I have hated and despised illness. I warmly support the theory put forward by Samuel Butler in *Erewhon*, that the sick should go to prison and the wrongdoers to hospital. You could then talk of how Uncle Alfred was convalescing from his bad attack of embezzlement; but only horrified whispers on the back-stairs would betray the scandal of Aunt Georgiana's influenza.

To drag about with one, therefore, a nagging case of *grippe* hand in hand with tonsillitis is an appalling humiliation. To do so in Christmas Week is, into the bargain, a ridiculous inconvenience. The public and official festivities of the season, galling at the best of times, now become a nightmare. Under the news-reel arc lamps, faces that for years had seemed merely boring, suddenly assume such a malice as only William Blake would have appreciated.

But when one feels well again, when one can breathe without a sort of toothache in one's throat, with what a Pollyanna-ish eye one surveys the drab ritual of the streets! Outside the Victoria and Albert Museum great packs of young people gather with the first light, pretty little typists and young men slightly hang-dog in their demobilization suits, waiting to see the disputed Picassos before scurrying off to work.

The Picasso Rumpus

IT is a cheering sight, that almost reconciles one to London. The whole absurd episode of the Picasso-Matisse Exhibition has been well worthwhile if only for bringing crowds in to the museum. How endearing our fellow-countrymen are when they jumble up morals with aesthetics, revert to Victorian type, and seriously affirm that a pack of little schoolgirls, dutifully bored in front of the royal effigies from Westminster Abbey, might become corrupted by a glimpse of the horrid Picassos in the nearby gallery! As I have already said in this column, I am disappointed by the turn Picasso's painting seems lately to have taken. But I would rather be corrupted with his genius, than be saved with a hundred canvases of the "Queen Mary off the Needles" or "Portraits of Jennifer" or studies of that eccentric peer, Lord By-and-Large (seen in the Lords during the American Loan debate, for the first time in a generation), whose perpetrators whip themselves into virtuous indignation over this show.

Salome and Rima

THE works of art which arouse the fury of one generation succeed often enough in merely disappointing the next. How schoolboyish now seems the vague eroticism of *Salome*, what an innocuous little squib is *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. I can remember the heavenly sense of wickedness I drew

from reading a smuggled copy of Marguerite's *La Garçonne* by the light of a fading electric torch among bass and sêcateurs in the secrecy of the potting-shed. I'm sure if I were to re-read it—and where would I find the energy?—it would turn out to be infinitely more respectable than *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* which for nearly two centuries after all has been a classic.

And the monument to Rima behind the Serpentine. I can remember my elders nagging themselves almost to illness with their indignation. People painted it blue by night, wrote in their hundreds to *The Times*, some Parliamentary Questions were even asked of the Minister who, in those romantic 'twenties, was still called the First Commissioner of Works. And look at Rima today! Abandoned, forgotten—a dainty little piece of road-house formalism among the peeling trees and the thin urban grass.

The Sugar Plum Fairy

How strange it is to see a photograph of Lord and Lady Keynes, triumphantly, or almost triumphantly, returned from America, and to think back to some Christmas holidays soon after the ending of the First German War, when one was taken as a treat to see Lydia Lopokova dance. If I remember rightly, it was *The Sleeping Princess*, one of Diaghileff's most ambitious ventures, and



Lord Queenborough studied one of the pictures. The portrait of Air Chief Marshal Sir Sholto Douglas by T. C. Dugdale, R.A., R.P., is on the left



S/Ldr. Ian McRitchie, D.F.C., looked at the portrait of himself painted by Roy Nockolds. This Australian flying ace was shot down, wounded and taken prisoner while taking part in the epic raid on Amiens prison during which G/C Pickard ("F for Freddie") lost his life

the last flourish of Leon Bakst's overblown talent. I cannot remember whether Tchaikovsky's *Casse-Noisette Suite* is included in that ballet, but I will always imagine it is, and recall the awe and delight with which a pair of childish eyes watched the future Lady Keynes perform the dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy. Nowadays it seems a shoddy enough little tune that must immediately silence the wireless of any person of taste. But when Lady Keynes danced to it, it became to a childish eye as bright, as light, as lyrical as cirrus cloud in summer.

Mrs. Stoop

ONCE when scared to the point of stutters, I was making my first sorties into the big world, I met Lydia Lopokova. It was at lunch in the house of a fantastic and enchanting figure whose death, though it occurred, I suppose, some fifteen years ago, I continue to mourn: a Dutch lady of infinite taste and paradoxically infinite kindness, and an accent in all languages like a sirlain. She was called Bertha Stoop; to her charming house, which was filled with precious objects, came the most amusing company in London. I have not yet reached an age that would justify my becoming a permanent *laudator temporis acti*, but I know of no house nowadays which could furnish the same range of conversation, "like a brilliant player of billiards, the strokes follow one another, piff, paff" as the lovely Georgiana Devonshire said of Charles James Fox's talk. Not even Lady Cunard's tea-table, strange oasis in the glittering waste of the Dorchester, could assemble such wit and such charm.

Then there were her musical parties. A thousand memories crowd one's head as musicians and fastidious Foreign Office potentates crowded her stairs. A new Ravel composition cannot be heard for the din that Maurice Ravel himself is making on the landing, talking and laughing for three. The jovial voice of Mrs. Stoop booms through the chatter. "*Taisez, Monsieur Ravel, taisez-vous, pour qu'on vous entende!*"

Then the wonderful supper afterwards—traditionally the enormous block of ice hollowed out to receive into its frigidly loving depths caviare of the finest quality, and in such profusion, I still feel ashamed of my greed.

Caviare

BUT caviare arouses the basest side of my nature. Once we had little to live on save caviare and vodka. It was crossing Siberia. We walked for miles one evening down the lurching, crawling train to the dining-car, where some so-called *boaf Stroganov* was flung at us with hatred rather than accuracy. It might well have been a lethal missile, it was so hard, bore so little relation to food. Then, resigned to starvation, we discovered we could buy enormous portions of caviare for two roubles. During eleven days we ate nothing else. At the end my wife declared she could never eat caviare again. (She has of course lived to take those words back, but they were sincere enough at the time.) I, made of coarser stuff, not recognizing boredom and satiety so easily as she, emerged from

the ordeal, my passion unshaken for the sturgeon's roe.

The Spectre in the Night Club

BEFORE the war, a French friend of mine had a cruel habit. *Bon viveur*, even frivolous by nature and habit, he suddenly took to keeping early hours. That is to say, bed at ten, with a book, good or bad, for company. But here was no life of the Industrious Apprentice. Instead, the most refined, far-fetched sadism. For he would rise again towards half-past three, put on his dinner-jacket, tie his elegant bow, and sally forth, to the Bagatelle, let us say, or perhaps a smaller place like the Melody Bar, whatever little *boite* happened to be fashionable at the time. Arriving there, rested, unruffled and stone cold sober, he would survey with an amusement no less cold the ravaged, blurred faces of his cronies.

I underwent without design much the same experience the other night. Some friends asked me to join them in the night club which for the time being is generally considered the most agreeable. I had been working. I would, I knew, return to work. No roses, raptures, not more than one brimming cup, one struggle round the close-packed floor for me. I went into the place. Many of my friends sat there, or fought with their elbows for space to dance. They seemed almost strangers, or like some objects slightly out of focus. Their conversation, normally beguiling, seemed incoherently diffuse. Suddenly I realized what was wrong. The fault lay with them, not me. I had the impudence to be out of tune with the entire room. Then I knew what it would be like to find oneself suddenly metamorphosed into a ghost.

Endless desolation for a moment assailed me. Then just when I was racking my brain for an excuse that would bring me out of the night club and back to life again, I found myself carried off to a table where two French *jeunes filles* were sitting. Impeccably brought up, very much of the *Faubourg*, they ought by all rights never to have been there. I'm sure their reactionary if charming father whom I happen to know would never have approved. But there they sat, exquisitely dressed, not a hair displaced, long white kid gloves on elegant arms that raised to their lips no liquid more deadly than lemon squash. I found myself in company again, no longer the spectre at the feast. I shall never know why they were there, or not at least for a long time since they have gone back to France. But I was infinitely grateful to them.

Genteel Muffins

I HAVE been told a story which for me epitomizes all the tragedy of Victorian gentility. A lady of the 'fifties, a colonel's wife, let's say, found herself turned into a widow, perhaps by the Mutiny. She was left penniless, forced into the ignominy of working for her living. And, worse still, the only job she could find was to sell muffins and crumpets in terraces where lived people exactly like her. On one shrinking hand she balanced her tray. The other rang the faintest peal on the hateful bell. "Muffins, crumpets," she called faintly, hardly above a whisper. Then: "Pray God, they don't hear!"

Nineteen-Forty-Six Ballade

The New Year is a puny sprite.
We ought to catch him while he's small.
And do our best to start him right.
So turn those pin-ups to the wall,
And shield his eyes from "Gunman's Haul,"
And "Baby Born on Honeymoon,"
And "Brilliant Young Physician's Fall."
The lad will grow up all too soon.

Preserve him from the nauseous sight
Of Piccadilly; folk asprawl
In parks. And spare his appetite
The anti-freeze, the sheepdip—all
Those cocktails deadlier than gall;
And shield, again, the hapless loon
From Joad, Sinatra and Bacall.
The lad will grow up all too soon.

"The hour when death is like a light"
He will not see. My crystal ball
Shows hangmen flying through the night
To Hamelin; pray do not call
His eyes to this, nor to the pall
Of ruin like a black monsoon
Above the Nippon ports. Recall,
The lad will grow up all too soon.

Envoi

Prince, you are free to keep your stall.
I mean to seek a Blue Lagoon
(Or wrap my head inside a shawl).
The lad will grow up all too soon.

E. S. T.



James Agas

AT THE PICTURES

Speech Delivered At The Gaumont-British Press Luncheon

MR. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:— There is a scene in Pinero's *Sweet Lavender* in which Mr. Bulger, a hair-dresser, is about to blunder into a married lady's bedroom. Deterred, he says: "I dare say I could have passed it off with a pleasantry." I dare say I could pass off today's occasion with a French quotation and a joke or two. Rightly or wrongly I feel that something more serious is called for, and my defence for taking up this attitude is based on a longer professional interest in film criticism than anybody in this room. The article on Charlie Chaplin entitled *Hey, but he's Doleful!* published in the *Saturday Review* in 1921 with the sanction and encouragement of Filson Young, and being my second contribution to that august paper, was the first criticism of the film as a serious art and the film actor as a serious artist to appear in the press of this country. That fact establishes my *bona fides* today.

Critics are always being told that their criticism should be constructive. Very well, then. I have been graciously accorded six minutes, and I intend to employ those minutes constructively. Whatever may be feasible in the domain of Lewis Carroll, in the world as we know it, constructiveness is possible only *before* an event. To say of a cathedral that it is hideous, and to say no more is destructive criticism; constructive criticism will say: "That cathedral's damned ugly. Pull it down, build it differently, and in this different way." But why not run up the building in the mind's eye, as it were? Why not visualize the deed before the attempt? Lady Macbeth is very sound on this subject. "Things without all remedy should be without regard." "What's done cannot be undone." This applies not only to cathedrals but to cinemas and to the films exhibited in cinemas.

Mr. Rank has just spent an enormous amount of time and money and courage and enterprise. With what result? One critic is bored. Another is appalled at the thought of sitting through the film again. A third talks of "a cold triumph." A fourth holds the picture to be "hollow at heart." I can well believe that Mr. Rank is dismayed and hurt by this. (Let me tell him that he will be much more dismayed and hurt tomorrow when the *Tatler* appears and some whey-faced fellow tells him of an article which I wanted, but was not allowed to call, *Cheops and Tomato Sauce*.) If Mr. Rank is disappointed in the critics it can only be because they have failed to give him that help which he feels should be the reward of money, time, courage, enterprise. But I repeat that help, constructive help, can be given only before the event. There is nothing to be done now about *Caesar and Cleopatra*. But what about *St. Joan*?

Let me use my mind's eye to pierce the future and say now what will inevitably be held later about any film made of this great play. Théodore de Banville, practising as a dramatic critic nearly a century ago, laid it down that "the eye grows swiftly weary of all stationary spectacle, however spectacular, and demands motion." From which one could almost think that he foresaw the cinema, where the shots change every forty seconds. Now might not Théodore, were he living today, have gone on to ask how an essentially peripatetic medium can hope to interpret an essentially static play? Maurice Baring, whose death we all deplore, asked, "Whether it was a greater thing for a poet to have soared high into the heavens of passion, or to have dived deep into the grey seas of reason." "Into those seas," he said, "Victor Hugo never dived, and into those heavens Goethe never soared." And I say, taking my cue from Baring, that into the ocean of knees-under-the-table, hammer and tongs, Shavian argle-bargle, Mr. Pascal dives something constrainedly, while into the swift-moving firmament of the cinema's archangel Gabriel Mr. Shaw never soars at all.

Not once in *St. Joan* does this master-playwright "let himself go" cinematically speaking. He refuses to show us the coronation, obviously any film director's *bonne bouche*. He refuses to give us the defence of Compiègne and that unsuccessful sortie in which the Maid was taken prisoner, surely another cinematic tit-bit. He insists upon talk, magnificent talk, but still talk. Words, words, words. He proceeds from the argument in the English tent to the pow-wow in the ambulatory of the cathedral, and thence to the trial scene. For the better part of two hours nobody crosses the stage, and hardly his legs. In his preface Shaw says: "To see Joan in her proper perspective you must understand Christendom and the Catholic Church, the Holy Roman Empire and the Feudal System, as they existed and were understood in the Middle Ages." In what perspective then does the film propose to show us this great figure? As a girl dressed in men's clothes and so rude that the soldiers take her for one of themselves? As a young woman in blue armour adorned with silver stars, brandishing a gold sword, and prancing about on a white charger? Shall we be given a coronation scene with specially built organ and specially trained choristers? A pitched battle between the Maid and the Duke of Burgundy? And a slap-up bonfire at the end? Since Joan talks like blazes, blazes are her appropriate end. But in the play they are off-stage blazes. To build a picture on what Shaw deliberately left out may be a film-director's idea of fun, but it will not be Shaw's play, whereas to re-create the talk word by word and syllable by syllable to the exclusion of everything extraneous may be Shaw but will not be the film public's idea of fun. The essence of cinema is to cut the cackle and come to the 'osses. Shaw in *St. Joan*

deliberately cuts the 'osses and sticks to the cackle.

One word more. If any picture I, as a film magnate, am to make must be a Shaw picture I should choose *Androcles and the Lion*, in which Rome could flaunt her decadence *ad lib.*, and the sound recorders be given a free hand with the clash of chariots, the groans of gladiators, the complaints of martyrs, the impatient snarls of hungry lions. On the other hand if I were not bound to Shaw I should go to some great English novel, say Thackeray's *Esmond*, where the author's intention is not impeded but swept on by the duels, the great battles, the crowd and court scenes, the press of famous men, the onrush and array of history. I should consider Kingsley's *Westward Ho!*, or Reade's *The Cloister and the Hearth*. On one of these I should spend my million, and if I had a few pounds left over I should take a little studio and make a little picture out of Shaw's masterpiece.

Lastly, I should give a luncheon to the Press and say, "Ladies and Gentlemen. Such and such are my plans. Tell me what is wrong before I start to work on them. Tell me now." I have ventured to tell Mr. Rank what must, even with genius at the helm, be wrong about *St. Joan*. I hope he does not make this picture. I hope that, if he does, it will gross twenty million pounds. For that will be his only reward.



"... and the last straw was when you started yelling 'Author!' 'Author!'"

Where The Big Shows Are Created

Robert Nesbitt: The Man Who Does It

● In a room on top of a big building in Shaftesbury Avenue, London's theatre street, sits the man who dreams in terms of masses of girls, masses of dresses, soft lights and sweet music and masses of glamour. He is Robert Nesbitt, one of the foremost producers of today. Such shows as *Happy and Glorious*, *The Night and the Music* and *Fine Feathers* are his latest successes. In his office the telephone rings for Robert Nesbitt all day long. It may be an author, a composer, a manager, a star, a chorus girl or an aspirant for stardom, and he answers them all. He is the maestro behind the scenes of so much life and colour that we see on the London stage today

Deep in Thought: Robert Nesbitt has to think in terms of glamour. He sees the pictures in his mind then translates the visions into flesh and blood and lovely material



An Impromptu Pantomime. Charles Reading, who designs the manifold properties used in the big productions, brings in a crown which is to be used in one of the Tom Arnold pantomimes, while he and Joan Davis amuse Stella Moya and Robert Nesbitt with a demonstration

A Model of a Scene Arrives: Robert Nesbitt and Joan Davis, his lieutenant who arranges the dances and ensembles, carefully scrutinize every detail of the model



Worm's Eye View. General shemozzle at the Bounty's unbountiful billet. Pop (Jack Hobbs) and "The Duke" (Anthony Bazell) fraternize, while Mark (John Varley) blacks the eye of the awful Sydney Spooner (Christopher Banks). Taffy (Eric Davies), trying to quiet things by putting out the light, has stepped into Mrs. Bounty's jelly-pudding, and Porter (Ronald Shiner) is trying to keep out of trouble. On the right Thelma (Lorraine Clewes), Bella (Diana Dawson) and Mrs. Bounty (Janet Barrow) are registering consternation and perplexity, while Mr. Bounty (John E. Coyle) is undismayed

The Theatre

"Fit For Heroes"—"Worm's Eye View" (Whitehall)

THE two light comedies which may be seen on the same evening at the Whitehall (5.45 p.m. and 8.15 p.m.) are alike unpretentious and funny. *Fit For Heroes* puts a grumpy peer into a Portal house at the edge of his estate and gets its fun in part from the spectacle of lordliness bounded in a nutshell, in fact from the peer's vivid reactions to a septic bore, a left-wing Parliamentary candidate who shares the Portal as prospective son-in-law. *Worm's Eye View* amusingly exploits the humours of a bad R.A.F. billet, run by a landlady of such horrifying awkwardness that she would undoubtedly have been "struck off the list" by the Blackpool Lodging-House Keepers' Association. These pieces are at their best when they forget any pretension to comedy and are frankly farcical: each precipitates its crisis with the blacking of an eye, and this is in each case what Elizabethan sonneteers would have called "the right true end."

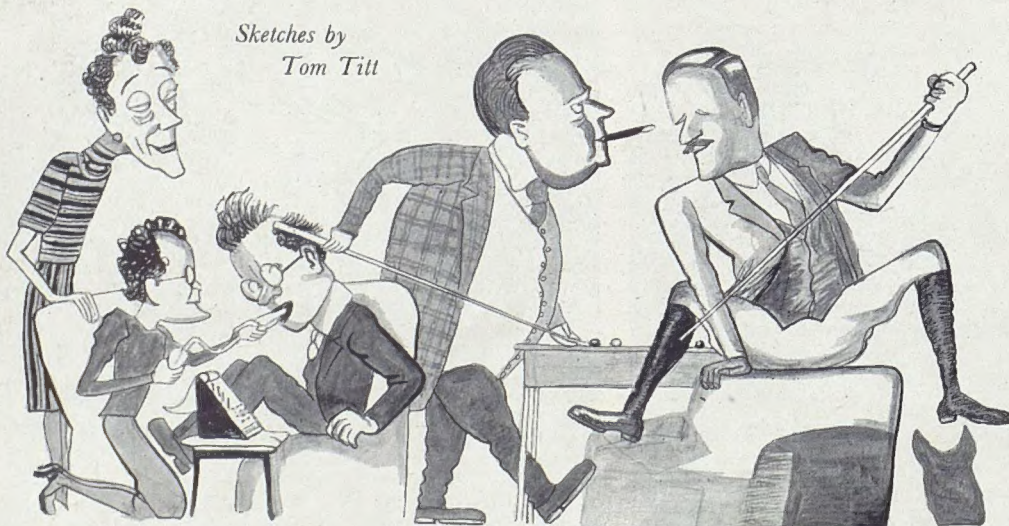
It is an eloquent house agent who talks the peer into his Portal and out of his ancestral hall, but eloquence is subtly reinforced by the

diplomacy of Lady Wimpole, who delights in the exchange. It not only solves her servant problem, but refreshes her relations with her husband. They are together again, a point which Dame Irene Vanbrugh and Mr. Raymond Lovell quickly make good. We suspect at the end of the first act that the comedy has shot its bolt. Nothing of the sort. With the second act four other characters are introduced, and the thing becomes a rip-roaring farce. One of the new characters is the Parliamentary candidate, a delicious prig deliciously played by Mr. Olaf Pooley. The mind of this dry fool is continuously at the flash-point of concentration, and he cannot afford time either to make or to tolerate a joke. He has only to open his mouth to cause the blood pressure of the peer and his soldier son to rise dangerously. The peer's daughter is, for some reason that would not be valid off the light stage, in love with the fellow. She is passing through an earnestly sociological phase and wears spectacles to proclaim her seriousness—and to bedevil her natural attractiveness. Lady Wimpole needs all her diplomatic

resourcefulness to keep the peace of the Portal, but peer and soldier son decide in the end that appeasement is not their line. They wreck their guest's candidature with a piece of good old-fashioned electioneering. The black eye is duly handed out. The time has then come for the daughter to remove her glasses, and the remaining eye of the raw young doctrinaire is opened at last to her beauty. Mr. Jack Allen's entirely amiable hooligan is a great part of the fun. Mr. Harold Brooke and Miss Kay Bannerman are the authors and everything seems to favour the chances they take.

MR. R. F. DELDERFIELD has even less in the way of a story to tell, but *Worm's Eye View*, though not perhaps very attractively named, lives very happily on its incidental humour. There is a "love interest," but when the odious landlady's even more odious son has received his black eye, we are much too pleased to care whether the nice young sergeant will marry the nice young girl before or after taking his commission. All the billetees are pleasant boys, and they are all very pleasantly played, but the pick of the bunch is Mr. Ronald Shiner's arch-wangler, the Cockney with an obliging relative in every black market south of the Trent. He is quicker than others to excuse himself when trouble threatens, but he sees to it that his friends do not suffer for their relative slowness on the uptake. Naturally the nagging landlady has a meek little husband, and no less naturally he returns from a stolen visit to London potentially a wife-beater, and his wife's instant response to his word of command is wonderful to see. But before the landlady meets her master she has been played by Miss Janet Barrow with a veracity to make the flesh creep, and the smug municipal bureaucrat, Mr. Christopher Bank's brilliant little sketch of a woollen-headed assistant Town Clerk, completely establishes the blood-relationship between mother and son. Miss Diana Dawson plays the sweet little heroine with genuine charm, and with the manly young lover of Mr. John Varley gives the love interest all the romantic importance that it can possibly claim. But the piece is to be enjoyed as a lively and well-sustained display of high jinks.

ANTHONY COOKMAN



Sketches by
Tom Titt

Fit For Heroes. Lady Wimpole (Irene Vanbrugh) is supervising the way in which her daughter Elizabeth (Ursula Howells) disinfects the throat of Horace Barnett (Olaf Pooley). In the meantime Lord Wimpole (Raymond Lovell) and Major the Hon. George Wimpole, D.S.O., M.C. (Jack Allen) are discussing pig-sticking in Poona over a game of billiards



Gordon Anthony

Peter Glenville as Stephen Cass in "Duet for Two Hands"

Peter Glenville is appearing in the Mary Hayley Bell play *Duet for Two Hands*, at the Lyric Theatre. He took over the part of Stephen Cass from John Mills, and gives a very fine performance as the tortured young poet who is possessed of a pair of hands that are not his own. Mr. Glenville is preparing a production of the first Saroyan play to be done in London for the Company of Four at the Lyric, Hammersmith. Also the rights of his first play have been secured by the Tennant management for production in the spring. Peter Glenville's career began in the O.U.D.S., and he had his first leading professional roles at the Stratford Memorial Festival Theatre, playing such parts as Romeo and Brutus. Lately he is best known for playing opposite Vivien Leigh in *The Doctor's Dilemma*, and this was followed by a leading part in the film *Madonna of the Seven Moons*. He then became Director of and producer at the Liverpool Playhouse for the Old Vic season 1944

JENNIFER WRITES

HER SOCIAL JOURNAL

AT SANDRINGHAM

WITH the King and Queen, in attendance at Sandringham over the Christmas holidays, were several old friends: Lady Constance Milnes-Gaskell, who came with Queen Mary; the Hon. Mrs. Geoffrey Bowlby, who was in waiting on Her Majesty, and Sir Eric Miéville, making his last visit to Sandringham as Assistant Private Secretary before his resignation at the end of the year. Before the Court left London there was a little private ceremony at Buckingham Palace, at which Sir Eric's friends and colleagues in the Household bade him farewell and good luck in his new venture in the City, and presented him with a gift in memory of his long association with the Palace.

Among the newer circle at Court, W/Cdr. Peter Townsend, the distinguished pilot who was originally appointed as the last of the war series of "equerries of honour," and who has stayed on at Their Majesties' request, as a permanent member of the Royal entourage, was also at Sandringham.

PRE-CHRISTMAS ENGAGEMENTS

IN spite of the family mourning necessitated by the sudden death of the Countess of Southesk, His Majesty's cousin, engagements still crowded the Royal diaries in the last pre-Christmas days. Their Majesties attended the memorial service for the Countess at the Chapel Royal, St. James's; were present, with the Princesses, at the tea-party to which the Queen invited some 200 men and women members of the American Red Cross; danced with members of their staff at the Servants' Ball at Buckingham Palace, where Mr. George Carter and his ex-R.A.F. band played; and, again with the Princesses, heard the choir of the Chapel Royal sing Christmas carols at the Palace on the eve of their departure for the country.

At the American Red Cross party, several of the Queen's personal friends were present: among them I noticed the Marchioness of Cholmondeley, the Hon. Mrs. Gilmour, the Hon. Mrs. Roland Cubitt, and Her Majesty's sister-in-law, the Hon. Mrs. Michael Bowes-Lyon. Mr. John Winant, the U.S. Ambassador, was a prominent figure, and among the members of the Household present I saw Sir Terence Nugent, the Comptroller of the Lord Chamberlain's Department; Major Arthur Penn, the Queen's tall, grey-moustached secretary; Sir Ulick Alexander, Keeper of the Privy Purse, solicitously fetching tea for the American guests; and Lt.-Col. the Hon. Sir Piers Legh, the Master of the Household.

MRS. ATTLEE AT HOME

MRS. ATTLEE was At Home recently for a meeting to launch an appeal for the Victory Club Fund, for which she is president of the Ladies' Committee. The Marchioness of Carisbrooke, chairman of the Ladies' Committee, assisted Mrs. Attlee to receive the guests, among whom were the Lady Mayoress and over fifty mayoresses from the various boroughs. The meeting was held in one of the fine State drawing-rooms of 10, Downing Street, where lovely pictures hang on the wall. The purpose

of the appeal is to raise funds (the target is £1,000,000) to provide headquarters, including living accommodation, for all ex-Service men and women of the British Empire, and of which Allied Naval, Military and Air Forces may become honorary members—firstly in London, and then it is hoped to have further headquarters all over the country. Although there are numerous Service clubs, there is so far no residential ex-Service club, which, with the present demobilisation, is becoming a very great necessity. Mrs. Attlee and Mr. Scott-Paton, who both spoke on behalf of the appeal, asked the ladies to try and launch a Mayoresses' appeal in their boroughs, which would get the appeal known and help to swell the funds. The Marchioness of Carisbrooke also made a short speech, and said she would go and speak at any meeting organised by any of the Mayoresses in their boroughs, and would do all she could to help the fund, for which her husband is chairman. After the meeting, Mrs. Attlee, who was wearing an attractive blue dress, entertained her guests to a delicious tea in the lovely panelled dining-room.

A.V.F. BALL

LADY ASHLEY held a small committee meeting and cocktail-party at the Allies Club recently, to arrange about the dance she is working hard to organise with the *Association des Amis des Volontaires Français* at Grosvenor House on January 12th, in aid of a "Foyer" in war-ravaged Falaise. As she is French by birth, the cause is very near her heart. There was a small model of the settlement buildings on view which interested everyone enormously. Earl De La Warr, chairman of A.V.F., made an excellent short speech very much to the point. Mme. Massigli came to the meeting in evening dress, on her way to another engagement. Baroness Ravensdale, accompanied by her tall, attractive niece, Miss Vivien Mosley, brought some wine with her which she gave to be auctioned at the dance. Others there buying tickets with the idea of bringing parties to the ball were Lady Middleton, Lady Roderic Pratt, Mrs. June de Trafford and Mrs. Jackie Ward. Lady Ashley, who wore Red Cross uniform, told me she had only returned from the Continent the previous day.

CHILDREN'S PARTY

MANY potential stars of the future were assembled together at the children's party given on a recent Sunday, jointly by Mrs. Alan Rae Smith (Helen Lacy) and her sister-in-law, Mrs. Anthony Hippisley-Coxe, for their two adorable children, Linnet Rae Smith and Nicholas Hippisley-Coxe, who were dressed alike in cream, piped with scarlet. There were over thirty children at the party, all under seven, and they had plenty of amusement. In one room there were roundabouts, in another a slide, both equally popular. There was a wonderful tea, with iced cakes and biscuits and masses of crackers; after tea all the children went downstairs, where they found a gaily-decorated Christmas-tree lit with candles, and on it a present for every child. Joanna Gyseghem, who told me she is four and a bit, was

there with her mother, Jean Forbes-Robertson. Penelope Dudley Ward had brought her little girl, Tracy Pelissier, who wore her hair parted in the middle with a bow each side. Lord Pender's little twin grandsons, Michael and James Dennison-Pender, came with their Nanny, both looking cute in their blue shirts with scarlet trousers and shoes. Frances Coleridge, the Marquess of Tweeddale's little granddaughter, also came with her Nanny, as her mother, Lady Georgina Coleridge, had a cold and thought she ought to keep away from the children. Others at the party were Helen Lacy's father-in-law, Sir Alan Rae Smith, Mrs. Robin Fedden and Catherine, Mrs. Hugh Casson and her two attractive little girls, Carola and Nicola, who both have long fair hair; they are great-nieces of Sir Lewis Casson and Dame Sybil Thorndike.

MATINÉE FOR WOUNDED

TO mark the closing down of the All Services Canteen Club last month, Mrs. Anthony Eden and Mrs. Littlejohn Cook organised a matinée of *Gay Rosalinda* at the Palace Theatre for wounded men and women of all services of H.M. Forces. This club has kept going, without a break, for six years, in spite of bomb damage on nine occasions, and has served nearly 750,000 meals and hot drinks—a wonderful record.

At the matinée I saw batches of wounded from every branch of our Services, and also men from many of the Allied fighting forces. Lady Muriel Derek-Jones, in Red Cross uniform, brought forty Red Cross nurses from Hampshire. A quartet to arrive together were officers of the Chinese Navy; there were several Russian officers present, who looked, as always, exceptionally smart in their neat khaki uniform with its glistening gold braid. Mrs. Ernest Bevin, wife of our Foreign Minister, was chatting to these officers before the show and telling them her husband was then in their country. Mrs. Bevin, who was accompanied by her daughter, watched the performance from one of the boxes with Mrs. Attlee, who had brought her youngest girl.

IN THE INTERVALS

DURING the first interval some of the diplomats present visited the two boxes, and in the second interval Richard Tauber and several members of the cast were presented to Mrs. Attlee and Mrs. Bevin. Mrs. Littlejohn Cook greeted her guests in the foyer. Miss Mary Churchill, looking smart in her uniform, arrived with several A.T.S. friends. She watched the performance from a box with Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Eden and Mrs. Littlejohn Cook and her son, Capt. Littlejohn Cook. Also at the performance I saw Marie Marchioness of Willingdon, Lady Waddilove and Sir Adrian Baillie and his schoolboy son, Gawaine, who arrived with Jack and Daphne Barker, the famous cabaret stars. Mrs. Washington Singer came with one of her daughters, and I also saw Major-Gen. and Mrs. Laycock, Baron Cartier de Marchienne, the Belgian Ambassador, and Mme. Massigli both came on late to the matinée, having first been at the Cecil-Wyndham-Quinn wedding.

Jan. 4th

Zetland Hunt Dance, Pierce Bridge,
Yorkshire, 8 p.m. - Actresses Twelfth
Night Party, Grosvenor House, 8 p.m.

Jan. 5th

Weddings - Captain Charles Janson & Miss Elizabeth
Leveson Gower, St. Margaret's, Westminster. - Capt. the
Hon. John Ashley-Cooper & Miss Petherick, Winchester Cathedral.



Mrs. A. V. Alexander, wife of the First Lord of the Admiralty, and her granddaughter, Jennifer Evison, opened the Admiralty House children's party by riding on Cinderella's coach on the roundabout

The Christmas Spirit in Whitehall

Photographs by Swaabe

● Throughout five years of war Mrs. A. V. Alexander never failed, whatever the difficulties, to hold her Christmas Party for Allied Children at Admiralty House, and this year the gathering was once again one of the best children's parties of the season. The amusements included the roundabout generously lent by Mr. Butlin, and the Sparks Marionettes. Among the guests were the daughter of Mme. Gusev, wife of the Soviet Ambassador, and children of Dutch, French, Chinese and Egyptian diplomats, as well as of many well-known English families. Mr. Churchill's grandson was there, and Mme. Massigli, wife of the French Ambassador, and Lady David Douglas-Hamilton were among the grown-up guests



The First Lord of the Admiralty, Mr. A. V. Alexander, C.H., tried his hand at working the marionettes, under the guidance of Mr. Sparks, while Jack Hylton watched



The Prime Minister spared some of his valuable time to look in at the party and worked the see-saw for Peter, Ruth and Virginia Lee, children of the Assistant Financial Adviser to the Chinese Embassy, and Ruth and Faida Hakin



Mr. M. Gaisford, Irish Guards, took the floor with Miss Mary Brock-Edwards, daughter of Lady Chesham



This supper-table group consists of Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Templeton, Mr. Michael Parkes, Miss Joanna Littleton, Mr. Peter Kapff, the Hon. Sheila Portman, the Hon. Anthony Wedgwood Benn, elder son of Lord Stansgate, Miss Charmian Allsopp, Miss Rose Anne Templeton and Lt. Angus Cadger, R.A.N.V.R.



Lord John Kerr, brother of the Marquess of Lothian, partnered Miss Virginia Hutchinson



Mr. Henry Montgomerie-Charrington, Life Guards, sat at a supper-table with Miss Diana Cross



Miss Molly Biddulph, daughter of Lady Amy Biddulph, wore silver-embroidered chiffon. She is with Mr. Harcourt Powell



Mr. M. Turner-Bridger, Coldstream Guards, and Miss M. McKelvie sat out for a moment for a quiet cigarette



Lady Ann James, sister of the Earl of Enniskillen, talked to Sir Ronald Cross, High Commissioner in Australia for H.M. Government in this country



Miss Georgette de Hart was in serious discussion with the Hon. Gerard Noel, the Earl of Gainsborough's only brother. Both brothers were educated in the U.S.A.



Mr. and Mrs. Bertoli were at a table for four with S/Ldr. and Mrs. Bergen. The dance at Grosvenor House was one of London's pre-Christmas parties, and was, as is always the case with the famous series of Queen Charlotte's Hospital Balls, a big gathering of young people



Miss Daphne Fawcett wore a spray of carnations on her shimmering evening dress. She danced with Capt. Nigel Spicer, R.H.A.

Young Guests Who Danced at Queen Charlotte's Christmas Ball



Lt. N. Snelling, R.N., Miss Petronella Elliott, Capt. Earl Cathcart, Scots Guards, and Miss Vernon William Powlett are the quartet in this supper-time group. Lord Cathcart is the sixth holder of the title, to which he succeeded in 1927. He was born in 1919



On the dance-floor thoroughly enjoying themselves were Miss Dawn Baird and Mr. Geoffrey Loyd



Lord Delamere's elder daughter, the Hon. Elizabeth Cholmondeley, sat next to Lt. Ian Forbes, R.N.



In excellent form were Capt. the Hon. John Mitford, younger brother of Lord Redesdale, and Miss Marie Millington-Drake



Mr. Derek Johnson and Miss Deirdre Methven, who comes from Scotland, were having a cheery evening together



Michael Redgrave and His Wife Rachel Kempson

AN ACTOR AND HIS ACTRESS WIFE

With Their Young Family at Their Thames Bank Home

MICHAEL REDGRAVE lives with his attractive actress wife and young family at a beautiful old period house on the Thames near Chiswick. Both he and his wife are at present appearing together in *Lovers' Meeting*, Michael Balcon's prisoner-of-war film. While he was working at the Riverside Studios, where he is starring in *The Years Between*, Michael Redgrave bicycled to and from work. This month he leaves for Germany to play Macbeth to the troops, while, after that, he plans to start a permanent company in London to present outstanding plays reflecting contemporary thought and trend. Michael Redgrave made his first stage appearance at the age of two in Australia, where his mother and father were both themselves professional artistes. However, almost twenty-five years passed before he again went on the boards as a professional. After leaving Cambridge he tried a variety of professions, all of them with success. He was by turn a journalist, author,

playwright (and one of his plays has had great success in many parts of the world), editor of two magazines and a public school master. Not until 1934 did he start his stage career with the Liverpool Repertory Company, later playing at the Old Vic in John Gielgud's 1937-38 season. Then came films with Gainsborough. He signed a long-term contract, and made several pictures, including *The Wheel Spins* and *The Lady Vanishes*, but the theatre is Michael Redgrave's first love, and he went back to the stage only to be interrupted by the war. He joined the Navy as an Ordinary Seaman and served aboard H.M.S. *Illustrious* until he was invalided out in 1942. While in the Navy he had his first and only glimpse of New York, where his picture *The Stars Look Down* was showing at the time; his later films, including *Jeannie* and *Thunder Rock*, have all made a success over there. Most recently he has played in that moving and beautiful film *The Way to the Stars*, which has just reached America,

and the thriller *Dead of Night*, which is destined for the same market under the new Rank distribution scheme. However, he gave his most outstanding performance in the stage play *Uncle Harry*, where he plays the part of a neurotic who is driven to murder one of his sisters, and afterwards sees the other sister hanged for the crime; and there are countless other finely acted dramatic roles that he has to his credit. Last summer he appeared in *Jacobowsky and the Colonel*, in which he played opposite his wife. They met and married while they were both working at the Liverpool Repertory Company, and their eldest child, Vanessa, aged eight, gives every indication of following in her parents' footsteps. She is training to be a ballet dancer at the Marie Rambert School, and takes her profession-to-be very seriously. William Corin is six, and has not made up his mind yet, while the youngest, Lynn, aged two, can be excused for refusing to consider the matter of her future career.



A Family Party in the Garden



*Photographs by
Pictorial Press*

Family Portrait in a Mirror



Mrs. Michael Redgrave with Vanessa, Lynn and Corin



Michael Redgrave Gives His Son a Piano Lesson

PRISCILLA in

PARIS

"OF COURSE, THE AUDIENCE WORKS HARD TOO"



Maurice Chevalier has endeared himself to audiences all over the world, both as a star in revue and on the films. He was last seen over here in a comedy he made with Jack Buchanan called "Break the News." He is at present scoring a nightly triumph at the A.B.C. music hall in Paris. One of his song numbers lasts for over one hour, and the enthusiastic audience even then calls him back again

Paris, December 10th.

THE requirements of "early posting" for Christmas, together with the happy-go-lucky methods of the French P.T.T. (read, Postes, Télégraphes et Téléphones), make it quite impossible for me to guess whether you will get this while you are still somnolent from Christmas fare—I hope you will have had the wherewithal to induce somnolence—or whether you are hopping about in the first fine energy of New Year resolutions.

Personally, at time o' writing, I do not feel in the slightest degree Christmassy, despite 5° below zero (Centigrade), and my New Year resolutions are still to be made! It's the fuel and electricity shortage that is cramping our style in Paris.

The Club des Cinq

THERE are quite a few agreeable night-clubs in Paris just now, and one of the pleasantest is the Club des Cinq, in the Faubourg Montmartre, that has been started by five young French officers who first met at the Olympic Games at Fort Lamy in 1941. They came across each other again in Africa and went through the Tchad campaign together. Being optimists, they decided that on the liberation of Paris they would found a club where they and their pals would be able to meet, invite their friends, have sing-songs and altogether enjoy a good time. Thus the Club des Cinq, with its simple blue-and-gold décor, somewhat sombre but enlivened by the multi-coloured play of lights and masses of hot-house flowers in illuminated glass vitrines. Michel Emer's fourteen musicians are all that a dance orchestra should be, helped out with François Toussaint's crooning, and the various other entertainers are always worth listening to. Even Edith Piaf sings there. Edith Piaf, who was once known as "la même Piaf" ("the Brat"), who sang in the streets but who is now the Yvette Guilbert of the day. The extraordinary thing about her is that she has changed so little in appearance in the last five years. The late Yvette Guilbert, in her early days, as you probably know from the famous Toulouse-Lautrec poster that has so often been reproduced, was a stringy, black-haired, bony woman in a tight-fitting, Nile-green frock, with long, thin arms in long, black gloves; but with success she became more than stout, her hair became Titian and her gowns as gay as Joseph's coat. Piaf's simple black frocks, nowadays made by a *grand couturier*, look hardly any different, when seen from the middle of the stalls, from the flimsy, home-made, black dresses she wore at her début, and one has to be quite close to see how *soignée* her little hands have become and how glossy are her heavy curls, now tended by a good *coiffeur*. Her voice has improved, and one is always amazed by the contrast of her frail appearance and her powerful voice—but I think I said this when she was singing a few weeks ago at the Alhambra, that huge, barn-like music hall that is so pleasant in the good old summer-time and such an ice-box at present.

At the Snug "A.B.C."

ENGLISH visitors to Paris—they seem to be rolling up, and I jealously wonder how they get their visas, for it's more than I can do to get mine for London—will spend a cosier evening at the snug A.B.C. (nothing breadlike or aerated about it!) Théâtre of Variétés, on the Boulevard Montmartre, where Maurice Chevalier is holding the whole second half of

the programme with a song-number that lasts over an hour and twenty minutes. Of course, the audience works hard too. I have never heard such sustained applause, and Maurice does quite a lot of chatting with his old Belleville pals in the gallery when he's not chaffing his friends in the stalls; but he certainly beats all records with the number of songs that he sings, and not even the fear of missing the last Metro (electricity restrictions have curtailed the hours of running) can get his admirers out of the theatre. Just after Liberation people were not quite sure of the part he had played during Occupation, and criticised the fact that he sang at the Vichy-controlled radio and went into Germany to appear at some of the prison camps; but when it was proved that he hid a whole family of friends—Rumanian Jews—at his place in the south, near Cannes, saving them from deportation, his popularity soared sky-high again. He is paying a visit to Hollywood next spring.

The "Singing Lunatic"

ANOTHER popular French singer is also going to the States shortly. Charles Trenet, who is known as the "singing lunatic," who writes his own songs and who has a sideline as a painter of delightful landscapes. Some of his pictures were shown at a recent exhibition held at the Galerie de Berri, and a certain critic (of the new brand that abounds) was heard to wonder whether Charles Trenet's medium was "thick water-colour" or "liquid oil"! One of the artist's friends kindly explained: "It's supposed to be water-colour, but Charles hates water like poison, so he mixes his colours with whisky or Fine Napoléon!" This story is evidently to be swallowed, but not necessarily "neat." Anyway, Trenet's telephone has been ringing overtime since this story got around. His friends want to know where he gets his supply of working materials!

A really cold snap has started and, failing outer warmth, we'd like to fall back on warming the inner man. I have had a bit of luck, however. Turning out a store cupboard that I thought was full of empties, I came across a small sample bottle of rum and a pre-war Christmas pudding. We'll set it alight and eat it *à votre santé, mes amis*, and it will be the biggest treat I have had in many a year.

PRISCILLA.

Voilà!

● M. and Mme. Bonfils were trying to find a Christmas present for Grandmama. "What about that Army blanket of mine?" said M. Bonfils. "Why I made myself a cape with it three years ago," answered his wife, "and in '44 I turned it into a coat for baby!" "Is it worn out?" asked her careful spouse. "Don't you remember, we had a pair of gloves made out of the best bits for you!" M. Bonfils dived into his overcoat pocket and thrust his hands into the gloves that he found there—they were worn threadbare and all his finger tips came through! For a moment he was downcast, but every cloud has a silver lining. "They'll make the old lady a lovely pair of mittens," he said, and got busy with the scissors

A Mother and Daughter

Penelope Ward and Her Daughter Tracy Pelissier



Mother and daughter are photographed on the stairs in evening dress, while Tracy prides herself on her lace petticoat



"Too many cooks spoil the broth," as the old saying says, so Tracy takes charge

● Penelope Ward is at present appearing in that record-breaking success *Blühe Spirit*, at the Duchess Theatre, which reached its 1,918th performance on December 29. The only record it still has to beat is that of the great last-war success, *Chu Chin Chow*. Miss Ward, who joined the cast in June 1944, is the third Elvira in the London production, for that lively and attractive ghost was originally created by Kay Hammond, to be followed by Betty Ann Davies. In the film *The Demi Paradise*, Penelope Ward played the leading role opposite Laurence Olivier; she has appeared in many British films and most recently in *The Way Ahead* as David Niven's wife. The daughter of the Rt. Hon. William Dudley Ward and the Marquise de Casa Maury, she made her first stage appearance at the Playhouse, Liverpool, in November 1935, and she remained with the Liverpool Repertory Company until the following spring. Her first London role was in *Ladies and Gentlemen* in 1937, at the Strand Theatre. Her marriage, took place in 1939

Photographs by F. J. Goodman

Marriage of the Earl of Bessborough's Daughter

Lady Moyra and Mr. Denis Browne, Guests and Attendants at the Reception

● The marriage of Lady Moyra Ponsonby, only daughter of the Earl and Countess of Bessborough, to Mr. Denis John Browne, the distinguished surgeon, son of Mr. and Mrs. Sylvester Browne, was an important social function, and the guests at the ceremony in Grosvenor Chapel, and the reception afterwards, included many well-known people. Our snapshots show what a happy occasion it was, for smiles are on every face, and the youth and beauty of the bride and the charm of her little attendants made the ceremony particularly pretty

Photographs by Swaebe



Mr. Denis John Browne, the distinguished surgeon, with Lady Moyra Browne, formerly Lady Moyra Ponsonby, and the bridesmaids, Lady Sarah Jane Hope and Lucy Bartlett, after their wedding in Grosvenor Chapel



Colonel Crankshall and Lady Doreen Hope, youngest daughter of the Marquess of Linlithgow, enjoyed a good joke



Lady Bartlett, wife of Sir Basil Bartlett, wore a becoming white fur coat. Her younger daughter, Lucy, was a bridesmaid



The Countess of Hopetoun, daughter-in-law of the Marquess of Linlithgow, faced the camera with her bridesmaid daughter, Lady Sarah Jane Hope



The Hon. Mrs. Ronald Strutt, daughter-in-law of Lord Belper, brought her son, Richard, who acted as page



The Earl and Countess of Bessborough, parents of the bride, gave a reception after the wedding. Lady Bessborough, who was Mlle. de Neuflize, is French by birth



Lady Louis Mountbatten, wife of Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, came in her Red Cross and St. John uniform and congratulated Mr. Denis and Lady Moyra Browne in the happiest manner



Captain Sir Basil Bartlett, actor and journalist, who served in the Intelligence Corps during the war, had a serious conversation with Lady Dashwood



Lieut.-Commander Sir Michael Culme-Seymour, R.N., talked with Mr. Churchill's daughter, Mrs. Duncan Sandys



The Bishop of Chichester, who officiated at the ceremony, talking with the best man, Mr. John Maud



Mrs. Arthur Ponsonby, a relative of the bride, was photographed in animated talk with Mr. Ambrose Congreve



The Hon. George Ponsonby and Viscount Duncannon, brothers of the bride, are in this snapshot taken at the reception. Lord Duncannon is talking to Junior Commander Mary Churchill, youngest daughter of Mr. Churchill



By "Sabretache"

PICTURES IN THE FIRE

New Year—Now Rooz—Hogmanay

"MAN never is, but always to be. . . !"
That somewhat unamiably creator of *Belinda* must have written this, so I feel, round and about the time when the date changes. He was probably staying with Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke, that intriguing politician who had a "Sabine Farm," and a pack of hounds, at Bucklebury, on the Bath road. It was a rendezvous for the *literati* of the late-Stuart period. The conclusion is compelling, and, probably, Pope was quite right in trying to prevent people from getting too much above themselves just because a New Year had blossomed. *En passant*, "blossomed" seems to be quite the wrong expression to apply to a season, when all of our hemisphere is deadlier than two door-nails. People just say "A happy New Year" taking a chance, and as a back-hander at the one that has just slunk out of the back-door, insinuating that, however bad the one they let in with a Dark Man at the front door, it cannot well be worse. Luckily "Hope springs eternal".! How much more sensible is the Musalmán, who dates his Now Rooz from the vernal equinox, when, although in Northern Persia the snow may be lying in patches on the hills and in the shaded valleys, the fruit blossom is out, and the flowers that bloom in the spring are making a show, while a blackbird, with a note so like a nightingale that you can hardly tell the difference, makes a very good substitute, and cares not a fig that no rose has yet put in an appearance. The followers of The Prophet select a moment when things are on the move, in preference to one when they are faster asleep than any dormouse. Jamshyd the Splendid knew what he was doing. As to those poor Scotsmen, it seems almost criminal even to write the word "Hogmanay"! Hielan Dew is practically unknown in the land. Fu'st futtin' with anything else would be just a hollow mockery.

Prince Regent and Others

WHY these Irish horses continue to make a mess of "that barefaced impostor the steeplechase brook," considering that most of the ditches in their own land are up to the brim most of the time, can only be accounted for in one way, namely, that they are standing too far back at the little 2-ft. hedge that screens it. It is a fault which it is not difficult to correct. The Australians used to do the same thing when they came up to India, and the quick remedy was found to be to set 'em in alight going into the water jump, and so compel them to take off close in. The Walers similarly disliked the open ditch if given too much time to look at it. Fine natural jumpers as they are, they picked up the knack at both classes of obstacle quite quickly. The Irishmen do not need to be taught anything about ditches, open or otherwise. I did not see Prince Regent at Wetherby, but I am sure that Prince Blackthorn and Monk's Mistake stood away too far at Windsor. Any mistake unbalances a horse, and I suggest that we take no notice at all of these little errors. It was very bad luck on Tim Hyde, Prince Regent's jockey, breaking a collar-bone and a couple of ribs when Red Fife came it in the hurdle race which followed the 'chase, but April is quite a long way off, and these things do not take very long to mend. He will, however, not be in race-riding condition for about a month.

Callaly

HE did not run in Prince Regent's race at Wetherby, and could not have had any chance at level weights even if he had. In last year's Irish Grand National (April 2nd, 1945) these were the weights: Prince Regent, 12 st. 7 lb.; Callaly, 10 st. Prince Regent did not run as he had a sore back, and they could not

get a saddle on him, but Callaly, giving the winner, Heirdom, 7 lb., put up a great fight and was only beaten a length. Heirdom is now fourteen years old and Callaly thirteen years. In the 1944 Irish Grand National, in which Callaly ran unplaced behind Knight's Crest, Prince Regent and Ruby Loch, in that order, the Irish handicapper gave him 9 st. 11 lb. to Prince Regent's 12 st. 7 lb. On April 2nd last year Callaly was given 12 st. 7 lb. in a three-miles-and-a-bit 'chase at Leopardstown, in which he ran a good third to that promising young horse Knight Paladin, seven years, 11 st. 7 lb. and another young horse, Lucky Tune, 9 st. 7 lb. Shortly after this Knight Paladin, 12 st. 9 lb., won the Champion 'Chase, 2 miles and 40 yards, at Naas quite comfortably. I still cannot work it out that Callaly and Prince Regent are one and the same horse over 3 miles.

The Rules of Racing

IN his speech at the Gimcrack Dinner the Senior Steward of the Jockey Club, Sir Humphrey de Trafford, expressed himself strongly in favour of the deletion of all the words after "disqualification" in Rule 140 (1) in the Rules of Racing of the Jockey Club. This rule is the one relating to crossing, and the words were "unless it be proved that he was two clear lengths in front when he crossed." The elimination, I think, was long overdue. Who can prove with mathematical certainty that any horse was a clear 16 ft. in front when he took his rival's "water"? Certainly no one excepting those riding in the race, and not always even they. The operative word is "interfered." A. might cause interference with B. without crossing him or bumping him. It has happened often enough. A horse will change his leg even at the threat of something coming across him. The mischief is done long before the offender is two lengths ahead. Any tightening-up of the rules against foul riding or rough-house methods is indeed welcome. In this regard there would appear to be some doubt existing as to the exact meaning of "two lengths clear." Surely two lengths of daylight? A horse's length is 8 ft. from head to croup.

From the Shiny East

A CORRESPONDENT in Old Calcutta, who desires to be anonymous, has written me an interesting "wartime" letter, from which I make a few discreet (I hope) extracts. She writes:

I thought enclosed from a friend in the Neilgherries [Some very beautiful hills in Southern India.—"S."] might interest you, as I am sure none of the local papers have any time for anything but the Congress-wallahs. She got it from a pal at home, and I expect you will say "You're telling me!"

Here is what her friend wrote her:

"You say you are thinking of pulling up your sticks and coming home; because things are so difficult in India and are likely to get much worse under the coming régime. Take my tip and don't. You say servants are difficult and not so good! Here you won't get any at all. Food! You will find out if you come home how really bad it can be, and what absolute daylight robbery goes on in particularly the spot places. We (B. and I) get about two eggs each per month: fowls and game out of production; whisky ditto; everything short—including clothes and shoes, and people's tempers. You, at any rate, can still get the ubiquitous *Murghi* (hen) and eggs and milk. You try it in England! You have the best climate in the world—how well I remember it—here we have to queue up for almost everything—very often in rain—and then don't get it! Take my tip and stay where you are."

I think the advice sounds sensible. You will laugh if I say anything about the Jap blitz on Calcutta after what I know you have had in London and round about. We got a few bombs, some casualties, but *all* the Jap planes.



Major Lord Ebury after the Investiture

Major Lord Ebury, R.A., received his D.S.O. from His Majesty at a Buckingham Palace Investiture. His sons by his first marriage, the Hon. Francis and the Hon. Robert Grosvenor, came with him



Major Hugh Brassey, Decorated with the Military Cross

Major Hugh Brassey, Royal Scots Greys, received the Military Cross at a recent Investiture. Mrs. Brassey, only child of Major Maurice Kingscote and Mrs. Kingscote, is with him



Brigadier K. Hervey Receives His D.S.O.

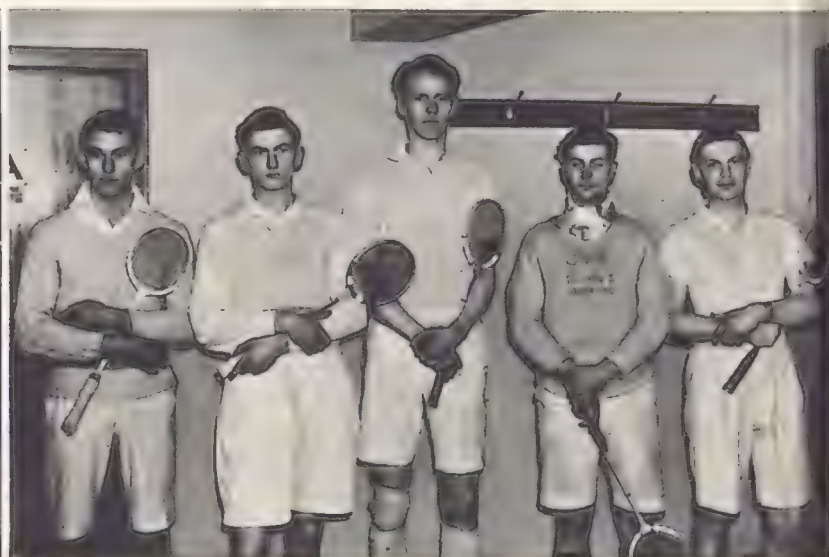
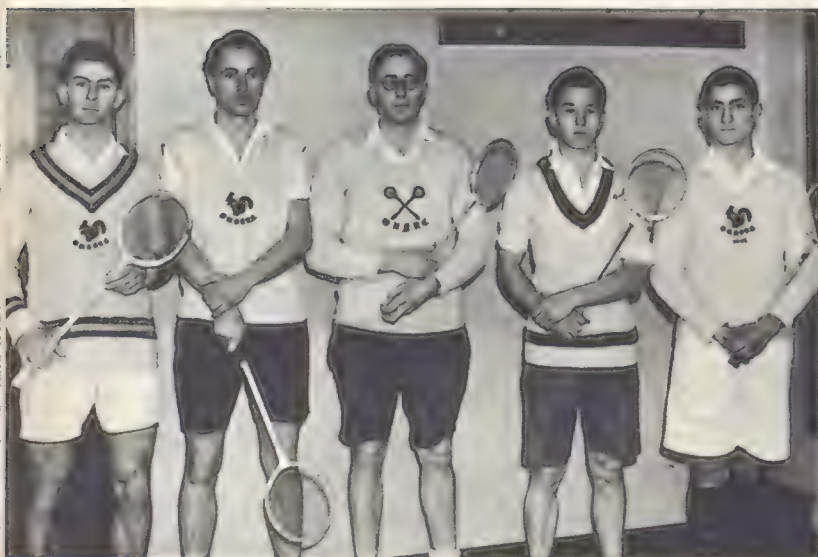
Brig. Keith Hervey was photographed with Mrs. Hervey after he had attended the Investiture to receive his D.S.O. from the King



The Garth Hunt Meet at Holyport, Near Maidenhead.



The Kiwis, New Zealand Rugby Team, Giving a Demonstration of Tactics to Boys of St. Paul's School



Inter-University Squash Rackets: the Oxford and Cambridge Teams

Oxford beat Cambridge by four matches to one in the first official University squash rackets match since 1938. The Dark Blue side was (l. to r.) H. Lewin (St. John's), G. A. Wagner (Christ Church), L. M. Minford (Capt., Balliol), H. E. Webb (New College) and G. A. R. Swannell (St. Edmund Hall)

The Cambridge side, which lost to Oxford in the match played on the Metropolitan Police courts, Trenchard House, were B. G. Neal (Trinity), B. M. Trapnell (St. John's), J. A. R. Clench (King's), G. F. Boston (Capt., Clare) and A. G. Auchison (St. John's). The Cambridge captain lost to H. Lewin



Where the Village Green Provides a Fine Setting



Start of the Cross-Country Race Between the Royal Shrewsbury School Hunt and the Thames Hare and Hounds



Cross-Country Running: the Royal Shrewsbury School Hunt and the Thames Hare and Hounds Team

J. D. R. Hill, J. W. H. Lanyon, R. C. Lawson, T. C. Sinker, M. S. E. Hope (captain of the School and Huntsman), A. Champion, T. D. Thorniloe and D. P. Bion (l. to r.), the Royal Shrewsbury School Hunt, beat the Thames Hare and Hounds at Roehampton. The Huntsman led all the way and was first home

J. T. Race, J. G. Stubbs, R. E. Brown, D. G. Percival, C. Murphy, F. E. Honniball, W. H. Stebbing and E. Tomkins (l. to r.), the Thames Hare and Hounds team, met the Royal Shrewsbury School Hunt and lost to them over a 6-mile course by 49 to 29 points



"It's my nerves—I keep hearing heavenly voices chanting 'Stamps'"



"I want to know what was in that medicine you made up for my cold!"



"I'm sorry, sir, but second childhood doesn't count"

D. B. WYNDHAM LEWIS

STANDING BY

HANDING the War Box a bouquet of simple wildflowers for its sporting attitude during 1939-44, an ex-Special Correspondent quoting Kitchener by way of contrast seemed to assume that this temperamental warlord was the only big brasshat in modern history who viewed the Press boys *en masse* as something you find in the blankets in a disused enemy dugout. This is inaccurate, an American Staff officer was telling us.

In Virginia during the Civil War General George Meade, Grant's side-kick, conceived a marked distaste for the Press, especially after one of the boys wired to a New York paper that Meade had been prevented by Grant from retreating in the battle of the Wilderness. General Meade at once had this correspondent paraded, placarded "Liar" on his chest, and drummed out of H.Q. That night every special correspondent with Grant's army took a blood-oath never to mention Meade's name in print again, with the result that the public and the great white sachems in Washington alike speedily forgot Meade's existence and his career went down the drain.

Footnote

AND if you ask us, ever jealous for the honour of our profession, Meade deserved it, even if the Press boy's wire had been true. Hold everything. Kill that front page. Stop those machines. Fire that book-critic. Fire Joe Gizick. Clear all wires. Get me Paris, Reykjavik, Budapest, Pogo-Pogo, Abertillery, and Gertie Flobster. Switch that lead. Fire Sam and Dusty. Ask the boys in the back room at El Vino's what they 'll have. No, don't.

Lapse

ONCE again, as the time draws near for Our Tots to rally to the tattered remains of *Peter Pan*, we find ourselves reflecting with sincere melancholy on the way Slogger Barrie having hit on a brilliant dramatic idea, practically chucked it away.

Making Captain Jas. Hook (by a pure afterthought at rehearsals) cry "*Floreat Etona!*" with his last breath was not only good fun but realism. At least two 18th-century Old Etonians were hanged at Tyburn for highway robbery. Piracy in a nonchalant way undoubtedly

claimed a few more. (We've always suspected Captain John Ward, who would spring from carousing with "his Drabbes" to stab any of his crew using rude language, of having been a member of "Pop.") Equally one or two of the Eton Dames may have gone to sea, married Negroes, and run bagnios at Boca del Draco or San Cristobal de Habana. Slight start. Raised eyebrow. Languid recognition. Hulloo, Mother Midnight! That m'tutor under the rum-cask? Faint smile. Nod. Exit gracefully, settling rare Mechlin lace at wrists, to be rowed broodingly out to the *Bloody Jonathan* (fifteen guns), named after Dr. Davies, a popular Head Master of the 1750's. Oh, Mr. Mate, remind me to have that Harrovia gunner keelhaunched when we lie off Dead Man's Key. Ay, ay, Sir. Tell me, Mr. Mate, is it good form to know you have good form? Ay, ay, Sir. No matter. Kindly sprinkle yourself thoroughly, Mr. Mate, with lavender-water before you next presume to enter this cabin. Ay, ay, Sir.

A full-length piracy novel on this theme would have made Barrie our favourite rough-stuff author, next to Fighting Jane Austen.

Tribute

THAT Royal gift of £100 to the Centenary Appeal of the Surrey County Cricket Club reminds us of an interesting discussion we once had with E. V. Lucas at the Oval.

We wanted to know what became of super-annuated Surrey cricketers. Lucas said the fans gave them handsomely inscribed silver teapots and nothing more was heard of them. We asked if aged cricketers liked presentation silver teapots and Lucas gave us a peculiar look. We asked if the teapots were attractive. Lucas said that even in Surrey, where nothing is attractive except Jack Hobbs's smile and the summer dawn over Newlands Corner (its chief rival), a presentation teapot of this type stands out amid that fearful welter of rhododendrons and stockbrokers and aboriginals of Croydon, evoking fear and anguish. Hence it is bunged straightway into the parlour-sideboard, and the key thrown away.

Ever since that day at the Oval we've pictured grim little domestic dramas in Surrey hovels where forlorn ancient cricketers fondle and weep over their favourite bats, like the Rev. James Pyecroft. A hard-featured woman

and her shifty-eyed offspring cast sidelong glances, muttering in the Surrey patois.

"Granfer be main tedious."

"Ay, that ur be, ole rumsckellion."

"Rackon us could hit un another tidy clout wi' Charley Tickler."

("Charley Tickler" is the Surrey name for an old bedsock filled with hard clay, used by the natives for murdering each other.)

"Tain't no good wi' Charley, Granfer 'e thinks 'tis a bye-match 'e be seein' in dreams."

"Mubbe if us cud gie un a naasty turn, sudden like—"

"Maggie!"

So they burst open the sideboard and show Granfer his presentation teapot, and the poor brave old heart which has endured so much for Surrey and England on the bloodstained pitch suddenly breaks, and Granfer passes away with a single hoot.

Dump

AMONG those naughty Borstal girls who were kicking up a riot recently there may well (we couldn't help thinking) have been another famous heroine of fiction like Moll Flanders or Manon Lescaut, if any modern novelist had the opportunity and the genius to dig out their stories and doll them up for the market.

Mistress Moll and Mlle. Manon both had their heads shaved, with a dainty set of chains and a free passage overseas at their country's expense. Of the two Manon Lescaut is by far the more attractive, being lovely and tragic and magical—though a complete five-letter girl—and having inspired the world's most perfect short novel. But we doubt if it's very tactful at the moment to mention either of them, since in their age both the French and the British Governments were dumping their worst boys and girls, if alive, in America. One more black mark against Degenerate Yurup when some of the Middle West Congress boys get round to hearing about it, one fears.

The answer to those outraged boys, if anybody thinks of it, is of course that (a) 75 per cent. of the crimes then punished by death or transportation would be dismissed today with a five-shilling fine, and (b) crime is not hereditary, though on looking round the expensive West End restaurants nowadays one is apt to doubt it. Oh, Mumsie!

ELIZABETH BOWEN

reviewing BOOKS

CARAVAN
CAUSERIE

By Richard King

Under One Roof

NORMAN COLLINS has, as a novelist, a most engaging way with his characters. His attitude to them is at once friendly and crisp. He takes a liking to them; and this liking he communicates, in a most happy way, to the reader. He is never a bore about them. This may sound odd praise; but to me it means a good deal—just as many excellent people in real life cannot help being boring about their friends, many authors are boring about their characters, and relay these creatures to us with a heavy-breathing intensity which cannot but be putting off.

Mr. Collins's happy gift—or should one say this happiest of his gifts?—is a key to the total successfulness of his latest novel, *London Belongs to Me* (Collins; 12s. 6d.). This is a very long book—about 300,000 words: roughly, three times average novel length. It could be too long, but triumphantly it is not. It has nine main, and many subsidiary, characters; its locale is South London, and its action covers two years, from Christmas Day 1938 to New Year's Day 1941. The nine main characters all live under one roof, the roof being that of No. 10 Dulcimer Street, Kennington. This house, the property of the widowed Mrs. Vizzard, has been divided up and let out in modest flats. Reading upwards, these are the inhabitants' names: Front basement, Mrs. Vizzard herself; back basement, her mystery lodger, the medium Squales. Ground floor, Mr. and Mrs. Josser and their daughter Doris. First floor, Mrs. Boon and her son Percy. Second (and top) floor, front, Mr. Puddy; back, Connie.

These are the nine whose individual fortunes, through two years of momentous world history, we are to follow—and do (or so I found) follow with an unflagging zest. They are "little people"; and frankly, for the first page or two, I feared that Mr. Collins's purpose might be to show us that they had great hearts. Feared, in fact, that *London Belongs to Me* might be a final, monster addition to the now long list of "London-Can-Take-It" fiction. I should have known better, and soon did. For one thing, the blitzes play agreeably little part; serving, chiefly, to provide the satiric episode of the sterlingly unheroic Mr. Puddy. There is no propaganda on behalf of "littleness" for its own sake; and of sentiment there is the human amount. Human nature is sentimental, like it or not.

The Heart

IN fact, it is in his dealings with sentiment that Mr. Collins is at his most artful. He has a way of blowing up the balloon, then pricking it. The impending sob becomes the friendly-malignant chuckle. *London Belongs to Me* is a comedy—and London ought to be able to take that. It cannot fail, at times, to be Dickens-ish, but it is a good-humoured parody of Dickensianism. All situations are given small, realistic twists; for instance, the Jossers cut out the end of their Brighton holiday to come to the aid of the stricken Mrs. Boon, but Mrs. Josser does so in a far from ungrumbling spirit, and does not cease to take it out on Percy, the cause of the trouble. Kind acts, throughout, have their inverse side; and gettings-together, under stress, are counteracted by the old, small irritations.

It is conceivable even that some readers may find Mr. Collins a trifle too brisk, over-detached, perhaps even naughty. Myself, I never find asstringency any harm, and I am all for the relish of anti-climax. Sentimentally speaking, Mr. Collins more or less gives you Mr. Josser—mild, perplexed paterfamilias, retired clerk. He chips nothing off Mr. Josser: at the same time, he foreseeingly rations Mr. Josser, who might pall. Mad Uncle Henry puts in admirably few appearances, so remains

bizarre. Decidedly, Connie, the elderly nightclub girl—ladies' cloakroom attendant, if one must be exact—is the top triumph of Mr. Collins's art. Connie swipes this picture. She is a major figure. She swam, one feels, into her creator's—or so-called creator's—ken, as all the classic great girls of British fiction must have swum into theirs. If Connie does not live long, I shall be surprised. In the mortal sense, even her end is fitting.

No, there is no belittlement of the heart here. Most truly, in each character, is rendered the heart's location—Mr. Puddy's is in his stomach; Connie's attaches to her canary; poor flashy Percy's goes into his flashy dreams; Mrs. Vizzard's, though temporarily diverted to Mr. Squales, remains identified with her passion for the respectability of 10, Dulcimer Street. There are tragic moments—the Jossers' loss, and the repercussions of Percy's dream-bred, flustered, inept crime. The dead, awful blonde of the fun fair remains a haunting figure. The other out-and-out "awfuls"—Doris Josser's girl friend Doreen, and Mrs. Jan Byl, of Knightsbridge—are inexhaustible gifts to this blithe pen.

Queries

SO complete is the picture, in *London Belongs to Me*, that I brood over its few mistinesses or inconsistencies. The architecture, for instance, of 10, Dulcimer Street sometimes worried me. How, for instance, if this not large, though faded-elegant, house was of the kind Mr. Collins made me envisage, were there four rooms, for the Jossers, on its ground floor? And how, since the house, and therefore presumably its main room, faced south, did the Jossers' kitchen face south also—surely their kitchen would have been at the back? Where, and how many, were the Dulcimer Street bathrooms? I cannot believe that, at their low rent, the flats were self-contained: the bathrooms, which must have been communal, could not have failed to lead up to much drama, on which Mr. Collins, surprisingly, does not touch. Surprisingly, because otherwise his account of the vicissitudes of close-packed neighbourliness is so complete. And on one point, a bus route, I challenge Mr. Collins point-blank. See page 326. No 19 bus, I would be prepared to swear, has ever been seen at the Grosvenor Gardens stop.

Tension

"BEDELIA" (Eyre and Spottiswoode; 8s. 6d.) is a new novel by Vera Caspary, author of the now widely-famous *Laura*. After *Laura*, expectations of Miss Caspary must run high: *Bedelia*, let me at once assure you, is likely to disappoint nobody; this is a first-rate psychological thriller, in which the charm and cosiness of the scene make ever more strongly felt the growing alarm.

Charlie Horst, a high-minded young New Englander, architect by profession, has returned from a Colorado holiday with an enchanting bride, by name Bedelia. The sedate small Connecticut town that is Charlie's home hums with interest in the young couple: Bedelia's beauty, elegance, taste, charm and, on top of this, excellent housekeeping, soon become a by-word—Charlie, congratulated on all sides, glows with pride. When the story opens, the Horsts are giving their first Christmas party: all the homely neighbours, Charlie's old friends, are there. His cousin Ellen, who had been in love with him, is, loyally, as loud as anyone in Bedelia's praises. The only two possible snakes in the Christmas grass are Abbie, the other New York cousin, and Ben Chaney, the somewhat mysterious artist who has taken a shack in the woods to paint through the winter.

As pretty a Christmas picture as you could wish. And, unhappily, also the last day of poor Charlie's unshadowed happiness. Inexplicable things begin to happen; suspicion—and

(Concluded on page 28)

I SHALL not soon forget the first Christmas of Peace after the Second World War.

There were three of us, and it had been arranged that Peace definitely demanded that evening-dress should be essential. (I was five moth-holes up on the only other man present, and thus won tuppence ha'penny at a ha'penny a hole.) The dining-table shone with cut-glass, best silver, and three somewhat time-battered chrysanthemums (at a shilling a bloom) stood in a vase, mingling with masses of dried beech-leaves which should have "glistened like an autumn sunset" according to the recipe, but didn't. Each of us being single-ration folk, my two guests arrived punctually with a "walnut" of margarine and a level-teaspoonful of tea, wrapped severally in grease-proof paper.

Cocktails awaited their arrival. Having, alas! a face which in the Black Market must resemble something to do with the Archbishop of Canterbury or a Bigwig in Whitehall, I could not procure any gin. However, I had discovered a new brand of cocktail which almost any wine merchant will supply readily without your promising to marry his plainest daughter. It has a short name and leaves a "long" taste in the mouth—strongly resembling something-for-a-cold. (You simply must try it the next time you go "gay!")

The menu, written in French for the Festive Occasion, began with *Potage aux légumes en surprise*—the surprise being a whole tin of peas thrown among carrots, turnips, potatoes, onions, celery—quite regardless. Failing a turkey, goose, duck, even a rabbit, the *pièce de résistance* consisted of the new Soya-Bean Loaf, which a gourmet might easily find revolting, but which I was lucky enough to procure before the rest of the neighbourhood discovered that it was not on points. *Crème aux Fraises* followed this, and was really a blancmange made with flour, reconstituted eggs, milk powder, strawberry flavouring and a strong dose of cochineal to match the lights.

It being a season of good will, I had opened a tin of sardines; so these on Toast-Margarine concluded the repast—if you except my month's sweet ration and six antique almonds in two old silver *bonbonnières*. Moreover, let me add, our conversation fitted happily the jovial occasion. On the strength that one can often find a happy resignation towards one's own miseries by thinking of worse ones, we talked of Starving Europe, unrest in Venezuela and what is likely to happen to our Civilisation when atomic warfare gets going.

Then punctually at nine of the clock the "Waits" arrived. Three small boys, who, between fits of hysterical giggling, told us that the "Shepherds washed their flocks by night"; thrusting a dirty cap through the doorway almost before I had opened the door. Still, it is nice to realise how the Younger Generation are keeping up these old traditions. Now the Fifth of November starts early in October and Christmas Carols can be heard outside any night after November. Remembering, too, how, in the piping days of pre-war peace, a refusal to listen had once cost me a stone through the fanlight, the "Shepherds" that night fleeced me of a shilling. And so I returned to my guests. "Gentlemen, The King!" I cried, as I poured lemon-flavoured "squash" into port-wine glasses. "I wonder if we shall all be alive next Christmas?" asked the lady, who had been used to hearing this in the days of her youth from an acidulated old uncle. And, everybody looking at everybody else, echoed "I wonder!"



Lane — Andrews

G/Capt. Reginald J. Lane, D.S.O., D.F.C. and Bar, R.C.A.F., son of Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Lane, of Begbie Street, Victoria, British Columbia, married Miss Barbara Andrews, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E. Andrews, of Sand Hill, Oval, Alwoodley, Leeds, at St. John's, Moor Allerton, Leeds



Ramsay — Burley

Lt.-Cdr. James Maxwell Ramsay, R.A.N., son of Mr. and Mrs. W. Ramsay, of Hobart, Tasmania, married Miss Janet Burley, youngest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F. R. Burley, of Denham Mount, Denham, at St. Mary's, Denham



Seton — Ellicott

Lt. (A) Alexander Wake Seton, R.N.V.R., only son of Cdr. and Mrs. Seton, of Mounie Castle, Old Meldrum, Aberdeenshire, married Miss Rosamond C. M. Ellicott, W.R.N.S., youngest daughter of Major and Mr. C. F. Ellicott, of Horsted Cottage, Chatham, Kent, at St. George's, R.N. Barracks, Chatham

GETTING MARRIED

The "Tatler and Bystander's"
Review of Weddings



Gregerson — Hirst

Lt. Ian Gregerson, Glider Pilot Regt., only son of Mr. and Mrs. C. Gregerson, of Bishop's Avenue, N.2, married Miss Beryl Hirst, eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Sydney T. Hirst, of Dollis Hill Lane, N.W.2, at St. George's, Hanover Square



Leach — Stead

Major Clifford O. Leach, King's African Rifles, only son of the late Mr. W. O. Leach and of Mrs. Leach, of Maclear, Cape Province, South Africa, married Miss Margaret M. Stead, elder daughter of the late Capt. C. B. Stead, of Eckington, Derbyshire, and of Mrs. Stead, at the Cathedral, Calcutta, India

*Right:
Lt.-Cdr. Francis W. M. Carter, D.S.C., R.N., son of the late Capt. E. Q. Carter, R.N., and of Mrs. Carter, of Ashley Gardens, S.W.1, married Miss Elizabeth Bushell, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. B. D. Bushell, of Broad Merston, Hermanus, South Africa, at St. Margaret's, Westminster*



Carter — Bushell



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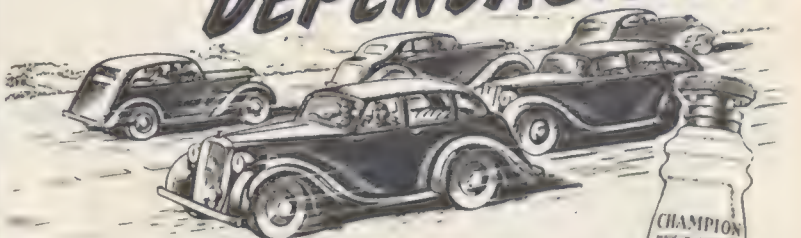


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Stories from Everywhere

A NURSE in New Guinea fell in love with an officer patient, and they planned to wed the day he was released from the hospital. Not wishing to be married in her uniform, she got permission to wear a wedding gown. After the ceremony the overwhelmed groom announced to all: "Isn't she lovely? This is the first time I've ever seen her with a dress on!"

"Isn't he handsome?" the excited bride exclaimed. "It's the first time I've ever seen him when he wasn't in pyjamas!"

A PARSON on holiday decided to go on a deep-sea fishing expedition. Embarking upon a small rowing-boat, he was taken out into the bay by the boatman.

After half an hour or so a violent squall got up, and it seemed as though the boat might soon be swamped.

"I wish," groaned the boatman, pulling hard at the oars—"I wish I had been a better man!"

The parson smiled.

"And I wish," he said, quietly, "that I had been a better swimmer!"

THIS good story was told by Captain Alec Dickson in a broadcast talk:

In March this year we were amongst the Elegeyo tribe in the Rift Valley of Kenya. Some of the young tribal warriors, with the sun gleaming on their oiled bodies, their painted shields and shining spears, looked like figures from some frieze on the Parthenon.

Noticing one of these young men gazing upon our light tank, I cheerfully made my usual opening gambit: "Well, your spear wouldn't be much use against that!"

"No," he replied quietly, "still, Effendi, you should do something about tightening those track-roads—it would never do in SEAC."

He'd been discharged three months previously from the Armoured Cars in Ceylon.

ELIZABETH BOWEN reviewing BOOKS

(Continued from page 23)

suspicion, above all, of Bedelia—raises its ugly head. Shortly, Charlie is forced to entertain the idea that Bedelia (of whose past he knows nothing but what she herself has told him) may be a professional husband-slayer, with several deaths to her credit in different States.

Temperament

THE above is a situation, you may say, too crude, too melodramatic, too preposterously painful to be worthy of a subtle novelist. Actually, it is Miss Caplan's subtlety that keeps the situation within bounds. The charmed glass of young married happiness is never, up to the end, quite broken. Charlie's conflicts of mind, his shying-away from the evidence presented him, piece by piece, by a third person, are recounted in gentle language. Bedelia, he is dispassionate enough to realize, is not merely his wife; she is, where he is concerned, a siren. He has been the somewhat repressed son of an austere mother: love for the exotic Bedelia has opened the floodgates of his pent-up romantic sensuousness. He cannot judge her because he cannot know her: he still sees her through a haze of intoxication. So much for Charlie: as for Bedelia, it is her *temperament*, rather than her possible guilt, that is the central enigma of the book. Her apparently reasonable little lies, her terror of the dark, her alternations between generosity and harshness, her winning wish to be loved by all and her frigid suspicions of other people. Is she a fiend? Or is she a sensitive, normal woman, reacting to the torturous atmosphere of suspicion that has grown up round her, and hurt to the core by the coldness of an adored husband? You have to read to Bedelia's last page, to know.

Bedelia, incidentally, is a "period piece" of an unusual period—1913. I take this choice of time to be more than the author's whim: the time definitely, as you will find, adds probability to the plot, and heightens the necessary atmosphere. In Connecticut, old-world propriety and security still rule: Ellen Philbrick, successful girl journalist, hesitates to smoke in her own bedroom; and it is still somewhat dashing to own and drive "a machine."

The Guilds

THE *Guilds of the City of London*, by Sir Ernest Pooley ("Britain in Pictures" series, Collins, 4s. 6d.) gives a fascinating account of the City Companies—of their origin, far back in the past, of the part they have played in history, their activities then and now, their rivalries in the matter of precedence, their different halls (now many, alas, destroyed), their livery, their functions, their privileges and their charities. The Twelve Great Companies, we learn, are the Mercers, Grocers, Drapers, Fishmongers, Goldsmiths, Skinners, Merchant Taylors, Haberdashers, Salters, Ironmongers, Vintners, and Clothworkers. Among the Minor Companies, too numerous to name in full, the last and youngest, for 200 years were the Fanmakers, appropriately incorporated by Queen Anne. Two others, however, have since been added. Sir Ernest Pooley himself was, from 1908 to 1944, Clerk to the Drapers' Company, of which he is now Master.

More Juveniles

TWO suggestions for young would-be spenders of book coupons—*Stars and Primroses*, poems chosen and drawings coloured by M. G. Green, which is published at John Lane at 6s., having won its publisher's prize for the best children's book of the year. And, *Escape from the Zoo* (Sylvan Press, 7s. 6d.) for which we thank Richard Parker: this, with its riotous drawings, makes a happy end to a year of escape stories.

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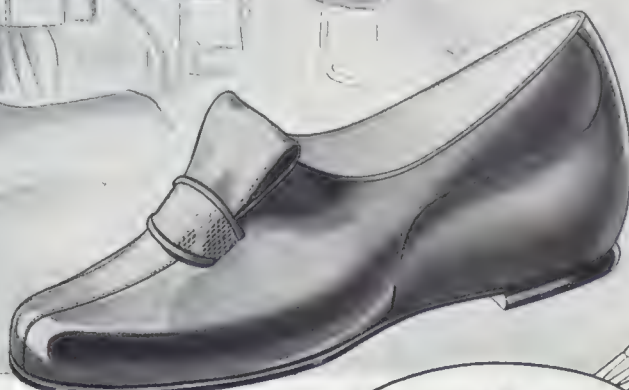
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AIR EDDIES

By Oliver Stewart

Money and Motors

WHEN an individual is in low water financially, he stops borrowing and tries to save; when a nation is in low water it seems that it starts borrowing and begins to spend on every conceivable social and other service at record speed.

In all the talk that went on about the American loan, this central fact about the behaviour of Britain now escaped notice. And there was also the other, hardly less important fact, concerned with the position of British motor-car and aircraft makers relative to American. Mr. George W. Lucas referred to this at Greenwich the other day.

"Is it true," he asked, "that it costs 70 per cent more to produce a British motor car today than it did before the war, while the comparable rise in America is 20 per cent? Why did a British motor car cost 15 pence per lb. weight to build before the war against 9 pence per lb. weight in America? Why did the British motor-car maker have to pay anything from 30 to 100 per cent more than his American counterpart for his raw and semi-fabricated materials, with hourly wage rates in this country half those ruling in America?"

Mechanization

THOSE questions wanted asking. The demand of the politicians that our manufacturers should export does not always take the price differential into account.

The explanations for it which are popular with the economists are, first, volume of production and, second, mechanization. They say that America produces more cheaply than we do because it produces in greater volume and because its factories are more highly mechanized.

I personally suspect that there is a more fundamental explanation. America's sources of power may be more economical, for instance. Oil is a more economical source of power in America than coal is here. Yet, even here, the energy content of a ton of coal at London is about forty times that needed to win and carry it.

And there is also the statistical aspect. Our politicians believe that America produces cheaply partly because she standardizes. I do not find that borne out in aircraft or motor cars. There are certainly more different types of aircraft being made in America than here, and I should say that there are at least as many different types of motor car.

The advantage of a multiplicity of types is that changes in popular taste can be met without delay. The probability is that there will always be somewhere the kind of aircraft or car to meet the market. Standardization is a boon when the right thing has been standardized; but it is disastrous if the original choice is wrong.

Coastal

I HAVE been reading the book by Squadron Leader M. C. D. Wilson and Flight Lieutenant A. S. L. Robinson called *Coastal Command Leads the Invasion*. It is really the first full account of the work done by Coastal during the most critical period, and it was good to see the work of the Air-Sea Rescue Service given a proper appreciation.

It is useful to study the work of Coastal, because it is one of the Royal Air Force Commands whose future must shortly be settled. It is fair to say that at the outbreak of war in 1939 it was for a time the most important R.A.F. Command. Will it be so again? What effect on the air-sea war will the atomic bomb have? And how will the peace-time Royal Air Force divide up duties between Coastal and Bomber Commands?

These two Commands were often working for exactly the same end, for example, in the destruction of U-boats. Bomber Command attacked the pens, Coastal attacked the U-boats when they were at sea.

This book contains a very large number of excellent



Coastal Command Ace Marries

Wing Commander Peter J. Cundy, D.S.O., D.F.C., A.F.C., of Coastal Command, who has been credited with the certain sinking of seven U-boats, has taken part in fifty-five serial battles, married S/O Sheila M. Frost, W.A.A.F., younger daughter of Col. Frost, O.B.E., at Frome, Somerset

photographs. It is written with a practised hand and it does tell the story more fully than it has been told before in official publications.

Metric System

PICAO is obtaining the views of different aircraft operators about the standardization of measurement systems for aircraft working on international routes. And so once more the metric system will be in the news.

Is it too much to hope that reason will at last prevail and that we shall all go metric? The metric system is the system of measurement adopted already by the greater part of the world. It is the easiest system in which to do calculations, it is a coherent system, it is the system of science and of radio.

British civil aviation would have gained much benefit by a change-over to the metric system. The temporary difficulties of making the change would be as nothing compared with the substantial and lasting advantages to be gained afterwards.

Those idiotic inches, feet, yards, furlongs and statute miles ought to have been abolished long ago. And it is the same with our monetary system, which ought to have been decimalized long ago. There is no excuse for maintaining out-of-date measures in a modern thing like flying.

Perhaps what the British Government has failed to do, PICAO will at last succeed in doing. The outcome of the questionnaire that has been sent round will be awaited with interest. There will assuredly be some British operator who will want to stick to statute miles and the rest of the rag-bag, but he will not be able to advance any but sentimental reasons.

The metric system is the one for aviation. The sooner we go over to it the better for everybody.



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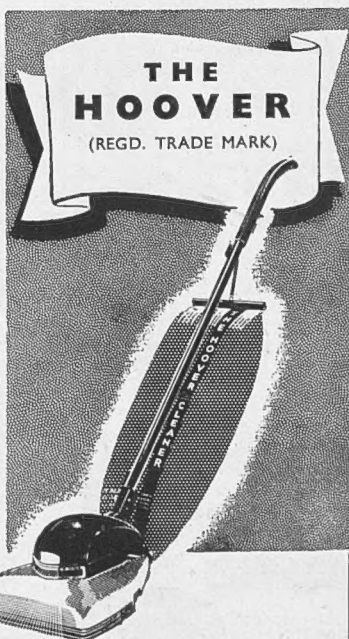
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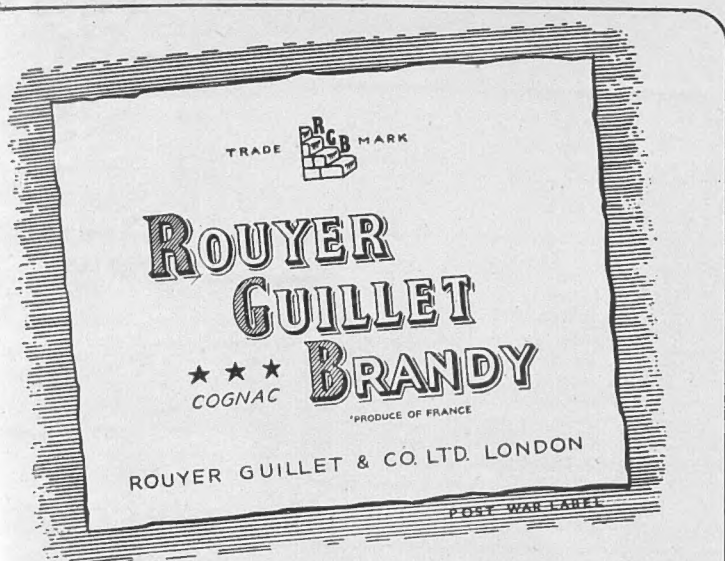


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